

Defending wildlife

In a year that saw the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service all but abandon its mandate to protect wildlife, and the Interior Department give hunters a green light to slaughter mother bears and cubs in their dens, your support enabled us to fight back.



We filed lawsuits, pushed for legislation, conducted undercover investigations, mobilized supporters and networked at international conferences to win protections for wildlife under assault. We helped more than 10,000 animals impacted by human-wildlife conflicts and trained nearly 3,000 animal control and police officers, shelter staff, wildlife rehabilitators, park rangers and others in humane management of our wild neighbors. We capped off this remarkable year of victories with a monumental win for dolphins.

TAKING ON TROPHY HUNTERS

- We blocked trophy hunters from slaughtering grizzly bears in Idaho and Wyoming with a successful lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service after it tried to strip Endangered Species Act protections for grizzlies in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.
- We released the shocking results of our undercover investigation into the unregulated U.S. trade in giraffe parts—dozens of dealers selling products made from thousands of dead giraffes. Our findings spurred international calls for action to protect giraffes from rampant trophy hunting and strengthened our campaign to pass the first-ever regulations on the trade in their parts.
- We defeated attempts in Congress to remove federal protections for gray wolves in the Great Lakes region, which would have resulted in the animals being trophy hunted in three states.
- We exposed the cruelty of wildlife killing contests that see hunters compete to bring in the heaviest haul of dead animals, which helped lead to a ban in Vermont and proposed bans in several other states.

PROTECTING WILD SPECIES

- Our 30-year fight to stop fishing fleets from killing and injuring dolphins who get tangled in their nets ended with a victory when the World Trade Organization upheld a decision that only tuna caught without the use of nets on dolphins can be labeled “dolphin safe” on U.S. store shelves.
- New Jersey passed the most sweeping ban in U.S. history on the use of wild animals in circuses and traveling entertainment shows, and in response to a petition we filed in 2014, Hawaii enacted a ban on the importation of dangerous wild animals to appear in circuses, carnivals or other public exhibitions.

In 2015, Cecil the lion was lured out of a national park in Zimbabwe and killed by an American trophy hunter.



RICKY GERVAIS AWARDED FIRST ANNUAL CECIL AWARD

Ricky Gervais was presented with Humane Society International’s first-ever Cecil Award at our annual To the Rescue! New York gala. The award recognizes his global advocacy against trophy hunting and his passionate activism for animals everywhere.

- Our pilot program to test the first-ever immunocontraception strategy for wild burros on public lands—the Platero Project—completed a successful second year and moved us closer to demonstrating that immunocontraception is a humane, sustainable population-management approach.

HOLDING THE LINE AGAINST HORSE SLAUGHTER

- We ensured that the final omnibus spending bill in Congress prohibited the government from sending wild horses to be slaughtered, and from killing healthy horses and burros.
- We helped renew the prohibition on funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture oversight of horse slaughter plants, effectively keeping these facilities shut down for another year, and moved closer to our goal of ending the horsemeat industry for good by securing a majority of House members as co-sponsors of the Safeguarding American Food Exports (SAFE) Act.